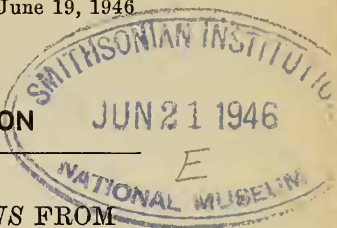


PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
BIOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF WASHINGTONA NEW RACE OF *RHIPIDURA RUFIFRONS* FROM
ROTA ISLAND, MARIANA ISLANDS.By ROLLIN H. BAKER, *Lieut. H(S), USNR*¹

A party from the Laboratory of Mammalogy, U. S. Naval Medical Research Unit No. 2, collected vertebrates at Rota Island, Mariana Islands, during the period from October 17 to November 2, 1945. Study of the birds reveals two specimens of a hitherto unrecognized race of *Rhipidura rufifrons*. This new form may be known as

***Rhipidura rufifrons mariae* subsp. nov.**

Type.—No. 384935, U. S. National Museum; adult male; Mariirua Point, Rota Island, Mariana Islands; October 22, 1945; prepared by Odis A. Muennink, collected by David H. Johnson.

Superspecific characters.—Similar to *R. r. saipanensis* Hartert of Saipan and Tinian, but with a richer brown coloring on the breast and belly and darker above, especially the rufous coloring of the rump, basal half of the tail and forehead.

Description of type.—Forehead and anterior crown light "orange rufous" (feathers with black bases); lores and auriculars black; eye ring black; chin, forward part of throat and malar region white (feathers with black bases); a few feathers on the posterior edge of the malar region tipped with "citrus drab"; throat and upper breast black with feathers on the posterior margin edged with white; lower breast, belly, side, flank, tibia, vent and lower tail coverts near "ochraceous-tawny" becoming lighter on the breast, especially in the mid-portion, and slightly grayer on the flanks (feathers with black bases); sides of neck, shoulder and back near "Dresden brown" becoming grayer on the neck and crown where feathers have darker shafts (feathers with black bases); rump and upper tail coverts near "Sanford's brown" (feathers with black bases); basal half of tail near "amber brown" with coloring extending distally on edges of feathers; rest of tail black with ends tipped with white; wings and secondaries dark, edged with coloring similar to back; underwing grayish with axillaries tipped with buffy white; tarsus of dried specimen dark brown with darker toes; bill dark brown with mid-portion basally whitish; eye color not recorded.

Distribution.—Rota Island, Mariana Islands.

Remarks.—The two specimens from Rota have been compared with six topotypes from Saipan and seven birds from Tinian of *R. r. saipanensis* and 20 specimens from Guam of *R. r. uraniae* Oustalet. The Rota birds

¹Research Division, Bureau of Medicine and Surgery, Navy Department.

have distinctly richer breast and belly coloring than either of these two races. Of specimens from Tinian, two have this coloring quite similar to the Rota birds while the five others are paler. Being situated between the islands of Saipan and Rota, Tinian birds might conceivably show some intergradation between the two races. There is some difference in the extent of white on the chin and throat of birds of these races; however, it is difficult to state with accuracy the differences since the preparation of the skins alters this feature considerably. Specimens of *R. r. saipanensis* have white feathers on the chin and much of the throat to form practically a solid band of white and with a heavy line of white in the malar region. The two birds from Rota have white feathers on the chin and only a small amount on the upper throat and with a somewhat lighter line of white in the malar region. Specimens of *R. r. uraniae* from Guam have a small amount of white on the chin and with a very thin line extending in the malar region. Weights of the two Rota birds are 9.0 (type) and 8.5 grams (No. 384936, U. S. N. M.).

Measurements of adult male birds from the four islands indicate that size differences are not sufficient to distinguish the three races. The measurements of 11 males from Guam overlap the measurements of birds from the other islands with the exception of bill length, the Rota birds having a slightly shorter one. Wing length of the Rota specimens is slightly smaller than that of the birds from Saipan and Tinian and more similar to the length of those from Guam.

	Wing	Tail	Culmen	Tarsus
<i>R. r. saipanensis</i>				
3 males—Saipan	68.0 (67.8-68.2)	80.6 (80.2-81.1)	13.3 (13.1-13.5)	16.8 (16.2-17.2)
4 males—Tinian	68.8 (68.2-69.4)	81.6 (80.1-83.4)	13.1 (13.0-13.3)	17.7 (17.2-18.4)
<i>R. r. mariae</i>				
2 males—Rota	66.0 (65.4-66.7)	82.3 (82.2-82.4)	12.2 (12.1-12.4)	17.1 (17.1-17.2)
<i>R. r. uraniae</i>				
11 males—Guam	66.2 (64.2-69.2)	78.5 (75.3-82.3)	13.5 (13.1-14.5)	16.6 (15.6-17.2)

The locality for the name, *Rhipidura atrigularis* Reichenow (Journ. f. Ornith., 1885, p. 110), was listed as the Palau Islands, but according to Hartert (Nov. Zool., 1898, vol. V, p. 53) this is probably erroneous and that the correct locality may be Guam or the Mariana Islands. As published the description might fit any of the three races discussed here. Since the type of *R. atrigularis* is not available for comparison and since Hartert found his Guam material to compare favorably with Reichenow's type, this name is apparently a synonym of *R. r. uraniae* and not pertinent to the race from Rota.

The writer is indebted to Dr. Herbert Friedmann of the U. S. National Museum for his helpful suggestions and to Dr. Ernst Mayr of the American Museum of Natural History for the loan of comparative material from Saipan and Tinian. Colors in quotation marks pertain to ones in Ridgway's "Color Standards and Nomenclature," 1912.

Rhipidura rufifrons mariae is named in honor of my wife.